Orientations

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I

It is useless to create illusions with the pipe dream of any optimism whatsoever: we find ourselves today at the end of a cycle. Already for centuries, at first unfelt, then with the surge of a mass that caves in, numerous processes in the West have destroyed every normal and legitimate ordering of men, and distorted every higher conception of living, acting, knowing, and struggling. And the impulse of this downfall, its speed and its dizziness, is called "progress." And hymns were sung to "progress" and we were deluded that this civilization is — a civilization of matter and machines — civilization par excellence. The entire history of the world was preordained to it: until the ultimate consequences of this whole process was such as to bring a few to an awakening.

Where, and under what symbols, those who sought to organize the forces for a possible resistance, is well-known. On the one hand, there is a nation [Italy] which, from when it became unified, had known only the mediocre climate of liberalism, democracy, and constitutional monarchy — dared take up again the symbol of Rome [the eagle] as the basis for a new political conception and for a new ideal of virility and dignity. Analogous forces were awakened in the nation [Germany] that had made in the Middle Ages the Roman symbol of the *Imperium* as its own, to reassert the principle of authority and the supremacy of those values that have their root in blood, in race, and in the deepest strength of a people. And while in other European nations some groups were already oriented in the same direction, a third force in the Asian continent [Japan] added itself to the alliance, the nation of *samurai*, in which the adoption of exterior forms of modern civilization did not compromise the fidelity to a warrior tradition centered on the symbol of the solar Empire of divine right.

We do not pretend that in these currents the distinction between the essential and the incidental is clear cut, that in them it made to the ideas by the opposing party an adequate persuasion and qualification of persons, that there were various outdated influences affected by the same forces that had to be combatted. The process of ideological purification would have been

able to take place a second time, so that some immediate and non-deferrable political problems were solved. But it was also clear that an alliance of forces was taking form, representing an open challenge to "modern" civilization: both to that of the democracies inherited from the French Revolution and to the other, representing the extreme limit of the degradation of Western man: the collectivistic civilization of the Fourth Estate, the communist civilization of the mass-man without a face.

The rhythms accelerated and the tensions increased finishing in an armed conflict of these forces. What prevailed was the massive power of a coalition that did not back down in the face of the most hybrid of their agreements, and of the most hypocritical of this ideological mobilization in order to crush the world that was rising up and that intended to assert its right. Whether or not our men were equal to the task, if errors were committed in regard to timeliness, complete preparation, or measure of risk, that is beside the point, that is not something that compromised the inner meaning of the battle that was fought. Likewise, it does not interest us, that today history is avenged on the victors, that the democratic powers which, having formed a coalition with the forces of red subversion just to conduct the war up to the senseless extremism of a unconditional surrender and total destruction, today sees come back to roost against the allies of yesterday a danger more terrible than the one they wished to avoid.

The only thing that counts is this: we find ourselves today in the middle of a world of ruins. And the problem to be posed is: do men still exist on their feet within the middle of these ruins? And what should they, what else can they still do?

II

Such a problem indeed goes beyond yesterday's alliances, since it is clear that the winners and losers [vincitori e vinti] now find each other on a same level and that the only result of the second world war was the reduction of Europe to the object of extra-European powers and interests. It must be recognized then that the devastation that we have around us is of an especially moral character. We are in a climate of general moral anesthesia, of profound disorientation, in spite of all the words of order in use in a society of consumption and democracy: the breakdown of character and every true dignity, the ideological confusion, the prevalence of the lowest interests, living hand to mouth, are what characterizes, in general, the post-war man. To recognize this, also means to recognize that the first problem, the base of every other, is of an inner nature: To pick oneself up, to rise up interiorly, to given oneself a form, to create in oneself order and rectitude.

No one has learned from the lessons of the recent past if he still fools himself about the possibilities of a purely political battle and about the

power of one or the other formula or system, whose new human quality is not made by a specific opposing party. Here is a principle that today more than ever should have absolute evidence: if a State possesses a political or social system that, in theory, is of value as the most perfect, but the human element was deficient, that state would descend sooner or later to the level of the basest societies. However, a people, a race capable of producing true men, men of right feeling and reliable instinct, would reach a high level of civilization and would stand on their feet in the face of the most calamitous tests even if its political system was defective and imperfect. One takes therefore a precise position against that false "political realism" that thinks only in terms of programs, party organizational problems, or social and economic prescriptions. All this belongs to the contingent, not to the essential. The measure of what can still be saved depends upon the existence — or not — of men who are in front not to preach formulas, but to be examples, not going towards demagogy and the materialism of the masses, but to awaken different forms of sensibility and interests. Starting from what can still remain among the ruins, to reconstruct slowly a new man to animate through a determinate spirit and a suitable vision of life, to fortify through the tenacious adherence to given principles – this is the true problem.

III

Something already exists as spirit that can serve as evidence of the forces of resistance and resurgence: it is the *legionary spirit*. It is the attitude of those who were able to choose the hardest way, who were able to fight even knowing that the battle was materially lost, who were able to confirm the words from the ancient saga: "Loyalty is stronger than fire" and through which the traditional idea was affirmed; that is the meaning of honor and shame, — not small measures drawn from petty morality—that creates a substantial, existential difference between beings, almost like between one race and another.

On the other hand, there is the realization typical of those in whom what was the end now appeared as the means, in them the recognition of the illusory character of multiple myths while leaving untouched those who were able to *achieve for themselves*, on the borderline between life and death, beyond the world of contingency.

These forms of the spirit can be the base of a new unity. The essential thing is to adopt them, to apply them, and to extend them from the time of war to the time of peace, of this peace especially, that is only a setback and a poorly kept down disorder—to those who bring about distinctions and a new alignment. That must happen in rather more essential terms than what is a "party", which can only be a contingent instrument in sight

of given political battles; in terms more essential than even as a simple "movement", if by "movement" is meant only a phenomenon of the masses and aggregation, a quantitative phenomenon more than qualitative, based more on emotive factors than on strict, clear adherence to an idea.

It is instead a silent revolution proceeding in the depths, that must be propitiated, to those who are, it first creates on the inside and in the individual the premises of that order that then will have to also be asserted on the outside, supplanting as quick as lightning at the right moment the forms and forces of a world of subversion. The "style" that must gain emphasis is that of whoever holds onto positions in faithfulness to himself and to an idea, in a collected intensity, in a repulsion for every compromise, in a total engagement that must be manifested not only in the political battle, but also in every expression of existence: in the factories, in the laboratories, in the universities, in the street, in the very personal life of the affected. One must reach the point that the type of which we speak, and who must be the cellular substance of our alliance, is well recognizable, unmistakable, differentiated, and can say: "He is one who acts like a man of the movement".

This must today be recovered, which was already the guarantee of the forces that yearned for a new order for Europe but which in its realization often was impeded and diverted by multiple factors. And today, fundamentally, the conditions are better, because misunderstandings do not exist and it suffices to look around, from the streets to the Parliament, because the callings are put to the test and one has, clearly, the measure of what we must not be. Facing a world of mush whose principle is: "Who makes you do it", or: "First comes the stomach, the skin (the Malapartian The Skin!)", and then morality", or again: "These are not times in which we can be permitted to luxury of having a character", or finally: "I have a family". One is able to oppose to them clarity and service: "We cannot do otherwise, this is our life, this is our being". Whatever positive will be able to be reached today or tomorrow, it will not be through the abilities of agitators and politicians, but rather through the natural prestige and the recognition of men whether of yesterday, or, and even more, of the new generation, that so many are capable and in that give the guarantee for their idea.

IV

Therefore, a new substance must clear the way in slow advance beyond the squares, the classes, and social positions of the past. It is necessary to keep a new pattern right in front of your eyes, in order to measure your own strength and calling. It is important and fundamental to recognize exactly that this pattern has nothing to do with classes as economic categories, and the antagonisms related to them. It could manifest itself in the clothing of the rich as well as the poor, of the worker as well as the aristocrat, of the

businessman as well as the explorer, of the technician, theologian, farmer, or the politician in the strict sense. But this new substance will know an internal differentiation, which will be perfect when, again, there will be no doubt about the vocations and functions of followers and commanders, when a restored symbol of unshaken authority will tower over the center of new hierarchic structures.

That defines a direction that is as anti-bourgeois as anti-proletarian, a direction totally devoid of democratic contaminations and "social" foibles, because leading toward a clear, virile, articulated world, made of men and leaders of men. Disdain for the bourgeois myth of "security", for the petty standardized, conformist, domesticated, and "moralized" life. Disdain for the anodyne bond characteristic of every collectivistic and mechanistic system and of all ideologies that grant to confused "social" values primacy over those heroic and spiritual values by which we have to define, in *every* domain, the type of true man, of the absolute person.

And something essential will be attained when the love for a style of active impersonality is revived, for which that which counts is the work and not the individual, for which a man is not capable of considering himself as something of importance, importance being instead his function, his responsibility, the task he adopts, the goal he pursues. Where this spirit asserts itself, many problems of the economic and social order will be simplified, which would otherwise remain insoluble if confronted from the outside, without the counter party of a change of spiritual factors and without the elimination of infectious ideologies that already in part prejudice every return to normality, as well as the perception itself of what normality means.

V

Not only as a doctrinal orientation, but also in regard to the world of action, it is then important for men of the new arrangement to recognize correctly the concatenation of causes and effects and the essential continuity of the trend that has given life to the various political forms in play today in the chaos of parties. Liberalism, then democracy, then socialism, than radicalism, finally communism and Bolshevism have historically appeared only as degrees of the same evil, as stages that prepare each one that follows in the complex of a process of decline. And the beginning of this process stands at the point at which Western man broke his ties to tradition, denying every higher symbol of authority and sovereignty; he claimed for himself as an individual a vain and illusory freedom; he becomes an atom rather than a conscious part of the organic unity and hierarchy of a whole. And the atom, in the end, had to find, opposed to himself, the mass of other atoms, other individuals, and to be involved in the emergence of the reign of quantity, of the pure number, of the materialized masses and not having another God

outside of the sovereign economy.

This process does not stop here halfway. Without the French Revolution and liberalism, there would not have been constitutionalism and democracy, without democracy, there would not have been socialism and demagogic nationalism, without the preparation of socialism there would not have been radicalism and finally communism. The fact that these various forms today often represent, one alongside the other or in opposition, must not prevent the recognition, to an eye that truly sees, that they hold themselves together, they link to each other, mutually condition each other and express only the different degrees of the same trend, the same subversion of every normal and legitimate social order.

So the great illusion of our time is that democracy and liberalism are the antitheses of communism and have the power to stem the tide of the forces from below, of what in the jargon of the syndicates are called the "progressive" movement. Illusions: like those who say that the dusk is the opposite of the night, that the incipient degree of an evil is the antithesis of the acute and endemic form of it, that a diluted poison is the antidote of the same poison in its pure and concentrated state. The men in the government of this "liberated" Italy have learned nothing from recent history whose lessons were repeated everywhere to the point of monotony, and continue their pitiful game with out-of-date political conceptions and hands in the parliamentary carnival, almost a dance macabre on a simmering volcano.

But for us there must instead be the courage of radicalism, the "no" said to political decadence in all its forms, both of the left and of a presumed right. And, above all, we must be aware of that which he does not share with subversion, and that making concessions today means condemning oneself to be totally overwhelmed tomorrow. The rigourousness of the idea, therefore, and readiness to push ahead by pure force when the right moment is reached.

That naturally also implies the disengagement from ideological distortions, unfortunately popular even in a part of the youth, because of which they indulge in excuses for the destruction that has already happened, deluding themselves by thinking that they, after all, were necessary and served "progress"; they think that it must be combatted for anything "new", put off into a determined future, rather than for the truth that we already possess because they, although in various forms of application, always and everywhere made from the base of every right type of social and political organization.

These foibles must be rejected. And we come back to those who are accused of being "anti-historical" and "reactionary". History does not exist, a mysterious entity spelled with a capital H. They are the men, if even they are really men, who make and unmake history; so called "historicism" is more or less the same thing as what is called "progressivism" in leftist circles and it wants a single thing today: to foment passivity in respect to the trend that swells and always leads lower. And, as to "reactionism",

you ask: You would therefore prefer that while you act, destroying and profaning, we do not "react", but stay to look so that they say to you: bravo!, continue? We are not "reactionary" only because the word is not strong enough especially because we start from the positive, we represent the positive, real and original values, the light of some "sun of the future" is not necessary.

In the face of our radicalism, in particular, the antithesis between the red "East" and the democratic "West" appears irrelevant, yet a possible armed conflict between these two blocks appears to us also tragically irrelevant it. To look only at the immediate, the choice of the lesser evil certainly remains because the military victory of the "East" would imply the immediate physical destruction of the last exponents of resistance. But at the base of the idea, Russia and North America are to be considered as two prongs of the same pincer because they squeeze themselves permanently around Europe. In two different but converging forms, the same foreign and hostile force acts in them. The forms of standardization, conformism, democratic leveling, frenetic productivity, a more or less domineering and explicit *"brain trust"*, and piecemeal materialism in Americanism can only serve to pave the road for the last phase that is represented, along the same direction, by the communist ideal of the mass-man.

The distinctive character of Americanism is that the attack against quality and personality is not put into effect by the brute force of a Marxist dictator and the mind of the State, but it happens almost spontaneously, by the ways of a civilization ignorant of ideals higher than wealth, consumption, productivity, production without brakes. Therefore, through a worsening and a reduction to the absurd of what Europe herself chose, the same patterns have taken, or are taking, form there. But primitivism, mechanism, and brutality remain so much more on one side than the other. In a certain sense, Americanism is more dangerous for us than communism, because it is a type of Trojan horse. When the attack against the residual values of European tradition is effectuated in the direct and naked forms characteristic of Bolshevik ideology or Stalinism, some reactions still reawaken, certain lines of resistance, even if ephemeral, can be maintained. Things are different when the same evil acts in a more subtle way and the transformations take place on the plane of the general customs and visions of life, as is the case for Americanism. Enduring this influence with a light heart in the name of democracy, Europe is already predisposed for the final abdication, so that it could even happen without even the need for a military disaster, but it will arrive, through "progressive" path, after a final social crisis, at more or less at the same point. Again, it doesn't stop here halfway. Americanism, willing it or not, works for its apparent enemy, for collectivism.

VI

Not without relation to that, our radicalism of the reconstruction requires that we do not compromise not only with every variety of Marxist or socialist ideology, but also with what in general can be called the *hallucination* or *the demon of the economy*. Here it is a question of the idea that in both individual and collective life, the economic factor is the important, real, and decisive one; that the concentration of every value and interest on the economic and productive plane is not the unprecedented aberration of modern Western man, but rather something normal, not a possible brute necessity, but something that must be desired and exalted. Both capitalism and marxism remain enclosed in this dark circle. We must break through this circle. As long as we know how to speak only of economic classes, work, salary, production, as long as we delude ourselves that true human progress and the true elevation of the individual are conditioned by a particular system of distribution of wealth and goods and have therefore something to do with indigence or affluence, with the state of *USA prosperity*, or with that of utopian socialism, we always remain on the same level of what must be combatted. This we must affirm: everything that is economy and economic interest as mere satisfaction of physical needs had, has, and always will have a subordinated function in normal humanity; that beyond this sphere an order of higher, political, spiritual and heroic values must be differentiated, an order that–as we already said—does not know and not even admits, proletarian or capitalists, and only depends on what things must be defined as worth living and dying for. A true hierarchy must be established, new dignities must be differentiated and, at the top, a higher function of command, of the *imperium* must dominate.

Thus, in such regards, many evil herbs that have taken root here and there are eradicated, sometimes even in our camp. What is, in fact, this talk of "State of work", of "national socialism", of "humanism of work" and similar ideas? What are these more or less stated requests for a regression of politics into the economy, almost as a resumption of those problematic tendencies toward an integral and, fundamentally, headless, corporatism that fortunately already found the way blocked in fascism? What is this consideration of the formula of "socialization" as a type of universal drug and this elevation of the "social idea" to the symbol of a new civilization that, who knows how, should be beyond both "East" and "West"?

These—it is necessary to recognize this—are the sides of a shadow present in not a few spirits, who only, for other reasons, find themselves on the same side as us. With that they think they are faithful to a revolutionary order, while they obey only stronger suggestions of them with which a degraded political environment is saturated. And among such suggestions the same "social question" returns. When will they finally take into account the truth, i.e., that Marxism did not arise because a real social question existed, but the

social question rises—in endless cases—only because Marxism exists, that is to say, artificially, and yet in almost always insoluble terms, to the work of agitators, to the famous "awakeners of class consciousness", on which Lenin expressed himself very clearly, when he refuted the spontaneous character of proletarian revolutionary movements?

It is starting from this premise that it would be necessary to act, in the first and foremost meaning of ideological *anti-proletarianization*, as the disinfection of the still healthy parts of the people from the socialist *virus*. Only then will the one or the other reform be able to be studied and actuated without danger, in compliance with true justice.

So, as the particular case, we will see, according to that spirit, the corporative idea can be again one of the bases of the reconstruction: corporativism not so much as a general system of state and almost bureaucratic composition that maintain the deleterious idea of opposed political arrangements of class systems, but rather as the need that in the very interior of the business that unity, that solidarity of differentiated forces be reconstructed, that the capitalist lie (with the subversive parasitic type of the speculator and the finance-capitalist) on one side, the Marxist agitation on the other, have jeopardized and shattered. It is necessary to bring the business to the form of an almost military unity, in which they compare the solidarity and the fidelity of associated working forces around it in the common enterprise to the spirit of responsibility, to the energy and the competence of the directors. The only true task is, however, the *organic reconstruction* of the business, and to realize it is not necessary to use formulas intended to adulate, for base propagandistic and electoral ends, the spirit of sedition of the strata inferior to the masses disguised as "social justice". In general, the same style of active impersonality, dignity, solidarity in the production that is typical to the ancient professional and artisan corporations should be recovered. Syndicalism, with its "battle" and those genuine threats which it now offers us too many examples, is to be banished. But, let us repeat, much one must reach that point starting from the interior. The important thing is that against every from of resentment and social antagonism everyone knows how to recognize and love his own place, that conforms to his own nature, recognizing thus even the limits between which he can develop his possibilities and follow his own perfection: because an artisan who perfectly discharges his function is undoubtedly superior to a king who is unfit and not at the height of his dignity.

In particular, we can permit a system of expertise and corporative representation, to supplant the parliamentarianism of the parties; but we should keep in mind that the technical hierarchy, in their entirety, can signify nothing more than a level in the integral hierarchy: they concern the order of means, to be subordinated to the order of ends, to which only the properly political and spiritual part of the State corresponds. To speak instead of a "State of workers" or of production is to make the part equivalent to the

whole, the same as reducing the human organism to its simply physical and vital functions. Nor can a similar obtuse and dark thing be our emblem, nor the "social" idea itself. The true antithesis facing both the "East" and the "West" is not the "social ideal". It is instead the *integral hierarchal idea.* In respect to that, nothing uncertain is acceptable.

VII

If the ideal of a virile and organic political unity was an essential part in the world that had to be swept away—and through it, we also brought back the Roman symbol—we must then recognize the cases in which such a need deviated and was almost miscarried in the mistaken direction of totalitarianism. This, again, is a point that must be seen with clarity, so that the differentiation of the political fronts is precise and, also, arms are not furnished to those who want to confuse things after due consideration. Hierarchy is not hierarchism (an evil that, unfortunately, today at times tries to come back in minor tones), and the organic conception has nothing to do with a statolatrous sclerosis and a leveling centralization. As for the individual, a true surpassing both of individualism and collectivism happens only when men are in the face of men, in the natural diversity of their being and their dignities. And as for the unity that must prevent, in general, every form of dissociation and absolutization of the particular, it must be essentially spiritual, it must be a central, orienting influence, an impulse that, depending on the leaders, assumes very differentiated forms of expression. This is the true essence of the "organic" conception, opposed to the rigid and extrinsic relations typical of "totalitarianism". In these fields the requirement of dignity and liberty of the human person that liberalism can conceive only in individualistic, egalitarian, and privatistic terms can be realized integrally. It is in this spirit that the structure of a new political-social ordering must be studied, in solid and clear articulation.

But such structures need a center, a supreme point of reference. A new symbol of sovereignty and authority is necessary. The delivery, in this regard, must be precise and ideological prevarication cannot be admitted. It is good to say clearly that here we are only talking about the subject of the so-called institutional problem; it is first of all about what is necessary for a specific climate, for the fluid that must animate every relationship of fidelity, dedication, service, disindividualized action, so that the gray, the mechanistic, and the oblique of the current political-social world is truly surpassed. Here today it will therefore end up with no way out when at the top it is not capable of a type of ascesis of the pure idea. Both the less felicitous antecedents of our national traditions, and even more, the tragic contingencies of yesterday prejudice, for many, the clear perception of the right direction. We can still recognize the inconclusiveness of the

monarchical solution, when those who today can only to defend a residue of the idea are kept in view, a symbol emptied and devitalized, which is that of the parliamentary constitutional monarchy. But in an altogether decisive way the incompatibility in relation to the republican idea must be pointed out. To be anti-democratic on the one hand, and on the other to defend "ferociously" (this is unfortunately the terminology of some exponents of a false intransigence) the republican idea is an absurdity that is the proof of it: the republic (we mean modern republics: the ancient republics were of the aristocracy, as in Rome, of the oligarchy, the latter often with the character of tyranny) belong essentially to the world that rose to life through Jacobinism and the anti-traditional and anti-hierarchical subversion of the XIX century. And to such a world, which is not ours, let it go. In terms of principle, a currently monarchical nation that becomes a republic can only be considered as a "degraded" nation. For Italy one does not play in the ambiguity in the name of a fidelity to Fascism of Salo, because if, for this reason, one should follow the false republican way, at the same time it would be unfaithful to something more and better, it would throw into the sea the central nucleus of the ideology of the 20s, i.e., its doctrine of the State in regards to authority, power, *imperium*.

It is necessary to conserve this doctrine only, without agreeing to go down and without making it the game of any group. The concretization of the symbol can be left indeterminate for now; the essential task is to prepare silently the spiritual environment adapted to what the symbol of an intangible elevated authority has felt and reacquired the fullness of its meaning: it cannot correspond to the stature of any revocable "president" of the republic, and not even that of a tribune or populist leader, the possessor of mere individual formless power, lacking every higher blessing, supporting himself instead on the precarious prestige he exercised on the irrational forces of the masses. It is that to which some have given the name of "Bonapartism" and that was justly recognized in its meaning not as the antithesis to demagogic or "popular" democracy, but also as its logical conclusion: one of the dark apparitions in the Spenglerian "decline of the West". There is a new touchstone for us: the sensibility in respect to all that. Carlyle had already written: "the Valet-World has to be governed by the Sham-Hero" and not by a real Ruler.

VIII

Another point must be made in an analogous order of ideas. It concerns the position to take in regards to nationalism and the general idea of homeland. That is so much more timely, inasmuch as today, in order to try to save whatever possible, many people would like to adopt a sentimental and, at the same time, naturalistic conception of the nation, notions foreign to the

highest European political traditions and irreconcilable with the same idea of the State which we spoke about. Even prescinding from the fact that we see the idea of homeland being invoked rhetorically and hypocritically by the most opposed parties, even by exponents of red subversion, that conception is not now factually at the height of the times because from one side it assists the self-formation of great supranational blocks, and from the other it always appears more necessity to find a European point of reference, unifying beyond the inevitable particularism that inheres in the naturalistic idea of the nation and still more in "nationalism".

Nevertheless, the question of principle is more essential. The political plane in such regards is that of an elevated unity in respect to the unities defined in naturalistic terms as are also those to which the generic notions of nation, homeland, and people correspond. In this higher plane, the idea unifies and divides, an idea carried by a resolute *elite* and tending to be concretized in the State. For this reason the Fascist doctrine—that part of it which remains faithful to the best European political tradition—gave primacy to the Idea and State in respect to nation and people and it understood that nations and people acquire a meaning and form and participate in the higher degree of existence only within the State. Even in periods of crisis, as there is currently, it is necessary to hold firm to this doctrine. Our true homeland must be recognized In the Idea. Not being from the same land or the same language, but being of the same idea is what counts today. This is the base, the point of departure. As for the collectivistic unity of nation, of the children of the homeland [in French, des *enfants de la patrie* from La Marseillaise]—which has predominated more and more from the Jacobin revolution until now, we in any case oppose it with something like an Order, men faithful to principles, witnesses to a higher authority, and legitimacy proceeding precisely from the Idea.

In the matter of practical ends today it is desirable to arrive at a new national solidarity, only we do not descend to compromises in order to reach it; the presupposition, without which every result would be illusory, is separation from that and taking the form of a definite political arrangement from the Idea—such as political ideas and visions of life. Even today there is not another way: it is necessary that among the ruins the process of the origins be renewed, that which, depending on elites and a symbol of sovereignty or authority, unites the people in the great traditional States, as forms arising out of the unformed. This realism of the idea is not to be understood as meaning to remain on a fundamentally sub-political plane: that of naturalism and sentimentalism, if not completely of the patriotic rhetoric.

And in case we want to support our idea also on national traditions, one remains very careful: because there is an entire "homeland history" of Masonic and anti-traditional inspiration specializing in attributing national Italian character to the most problematic aspects of our history: starting

from the revolt of the Communes supported by Guelphism. With it, a tendentious "Italianity" takes prominence in which we cannot and do not want to recognize ourselves. We leave it voluntarily to those Italians who celebrated the "second Risorgimento" with "liberation" and partisanship.

Idea, order, *elite*, State, men of Order—in such terms the lines are maintained, as long as it be possible.

IX

Something needs to be said about the problem of culture. Not beyond measure. We in fact do not overvalue culture. What we call a "worldview" is not based on books; it is an inner form that can be more precise in one person without a particular culture than in an "intellectual" or a writer. We must ascribe the fact that the individual is left open to influences of every type to the weight of everything among the bad omens of "free culture", even when he is to not able to be active in relation to them, to know how to discriminate, and to judge according the right judgment.

Thus the discourse cannot be here if not to point out that, as things currently stand, there are specific currents from which the youth of today must defend themselves interiorly. We spoke initially of a style of rectitude, of inner resistance. This style implies a right knowing and young men, especially, must take account of the intoxication working on the totality of a generation from concordant varieties of a distorted and false vision of life, that have affected men's internal strength. In one form or another, these toxic elements continue to act in the culture, in science, in sociology, in literature, as so many points of infection that must be identified and beaten. Aside from historical materialism, which we already mentioned, Darwinism, psychoanalysis, and existentialism are among the major ones.

The fundamental dignity of the human person must be asserted against Darwinism, recognizing his true place, which is not that of a particular, more or less evolved type of animal among so many others, differentiated through "natural selection" and always tied to bestial and primitivistic origins, but he is to elevate himself virtually beyond the biological plane. If today no one speaks much anymore about Darwinism, its substance nevertheless remains. The biological, Darwinian myth, in one or another of its variants, is counts for the precise value of a dogma, defended by the anathemas of "science", in materialism, whether of the Marxist or American civilization. Modern man is addicted to this debased idea, he recognizes himself in it comfortably, finds it natural.

Against psychoanalysis the ideal of a Self (or "I") must be validated, a Self who does not abdicate, who intends to remain conscious, autonomous, and sovereign in the confrontation with the dark and subterranean part of his soul and the demon of sensuality; that does not mean either "repression"

or a psychotic scission, but he brings about an equilibrium of all his faculties ordered to a higher meaning of living and acting. An obvious convergence can be pointed out: the disempowerment of the conscious principle of the person, the prominence given to the subconscious, the irrational, the "collective unconscious" and similar ideas from psychoanalysis and analogous schools, corresponds in the individual precisely to what the urgency, the impulse from below, the subversion, the revolutionary substitution of the inferior to the superior, and the disdain for every principle of authority, represent in the modern social and historical world. The same tendency acts on two different planes, and the two effects cannot avoid being mutually integrated.

As for existentialism, even to distinguish in it what is properly a philosophy—a confused philosophy— it remained, until our time, of pertinence to restricted circles of specialists. It is necessary to recognize the state of soul in crisis that became a system and was adulated, the truth of a broken and contradictory human type who experiences, with anxiety, tragedy, and the absurd, a freedom from which he does not feel elevated, and to which he instead feels without escape and responsibility, condemned in the midst of a world deprived of value and meaning. All this, when the best Nietzsche had already indicated a way to recover a meaning for existence and to give to oneself a law and an intangible value even in the face of a radical nihilism, in the sign of a *positive* existentialism, according to his expression: from a "noble nature".

Such are the lines of surpassing that must not be merely intellectualized but lived, realized in their direct meaning for the interior life and one's own conduct. To lift oneself up is not possible as long as one remains as though he is under the influence of similar forms of false and deviant thinking. Detoxified, a man can pursue clarity, rectitude, strength.

X

The position that lies in the zone between culture and custom will finally be made clear. From communism came the rallying cry of the anti-bourgeois that was also picked up in the cultural groups of certain "committed" intellectual circles. As bourgeois society is something intermediate, so there exists a double possibility of surpassing the bourgeois, of saying "no" to the bourgeois type, to bourgeois civilization, to the bourgeois spirit and bourgeois values. One corresponds to the direction that leads even lower than all that, toward a collectivized and materialized humanity with its Marxist "realism": social and proletarian values against bourgeois and capitalist decadence. But the other is the direction of those who oppose the bourgeoisie in order to actually rise up beyond it. The men of the new arrangement will still be anti-bourgeois, but by way of the aforesaid higher

heroic and aristocratic conception of existence; they will be anti-bourgeois because they disdain the comfortable life; anti-bourgeois because they will follow not those who promise material advantages, but those who demand everything from themselves; anti-bourgeois, finally, because they are not preoccupied with security but love the essential union between life and risk, on all planes, making the inexorability of the bare idea and precise action his own. Yet another aspect, through which the new man, cellular substance for the motion of awakening, will be anti-bourgeois and will differentiate himself from the preceding generation, is through his intolerance of every form of rhetoric and false idealism, of all those great words that are written in capital letters, of everyone who is merely a gesture, words intended for effect, scenography. Essentiality, instead, a new realism in pitting itself exactly against the problems that will be imposed, in doing so the value is not appearing, but rather being, not prattling, but rather realizing, in a silent and exact way, in sync with similar forces and in adherence to the command that comes from above.

Those who are able to react against the forces of the left only in the name of idols, of lifestyle and the mediocre conformist morality of the bourgeois world, have already lost the battle beforehand. This is not the case for the man who stands on his feet, having already passed through the purifying fire of internal and external destruction. This man, in the same way that politically he is not the instrument of a false bourgeois reaction, so, in general, he regains forces and ideals anterior and superior to the bourgeois world and the economic era, and it is with them that he creates the lines of defense and consolidates positions when, at the opportune moment, he will strike out with the action of reconstruction.

Even in such regard, we intend to reclaim a delivery not followed: because we know how in the Fascist era there was an anti-bourgeois tendency that had tried to explicate itself in a not dissimilar sense. Unfortunately even there the human element was not up to the task. And they knew how to make rhetoric even out of anti-rhetoric.

XI

Let us briefly consider a final point, that of the relationship with the dominant religion. For us, the secular State, in whatever form, belongs to the past. And, in particular, we oppose its parody that asserted itself, in certain circles, as the "ethical State", the product of a weak, spurious, empty "idealistic" philosophy associated with Fascism [that of Giovanni Gentile], but through its nature such to give equal approval, like a dialectical game of dice, to the anti-Fascism of a [Benedetto] Croce.

Yet though we oppose similar ideologies and the secular State, a clerical or clericalistic State is likewise unacceptable for us. A religious factor is

necessary as the background for a true heroic conception of life that must be essential for our political alignment. It is necessary to feel in oneself the evidence that there is a higher life beyond this terrestrial life, because only those who feel this way possess an unbreakable and unconquerable strength, only they will be capable of an absolute enthusiasm. But where this is lacking, to defy death and to take no account of one's own life is possible only in sporadic moments of elation or in the unleashing of irrational forces: nor is there a discipline that can be justified, in the individual, with a higher and independent meaning.

But this spirituality, which must be alive among us, does not require obligatory dogmatic formulations of a given religious confession; however, the style of life that must be drawn from it is not that of Catholic moralism, which aims for little more than a virtuistic domestication of a human animal; politically, this spirituality cannot but foster mistrust in respect to everything that as humanitarianism, equality, principle of love and of the forgiveness instead of honor and justice; it is an integral part of the Christian conception. Certainly, if Catholicism were capable of making a program of high ascesis its own and exactly on this base, almost like a recovery of the spirit of the best Medieval crusader, makes of faith the soul of an armed bloc of forces, almost a new close-knit Templar Order, relentless against the currents of chaos, breakdowns, subversion, and the practical materialism of the modern world—certainly, in such a case, and also in the case that, at the minimum, it held firm to the positions of the *Syllabus*, there could not be a single instance of doubt about our choice.

However, as things currently stand, given the mediocre and, fundamentally, bourgeois and parochial level, to which today practically everything that is confessional religion has descended and given the modernist destruction and the rising opening to the left of the post-conciliar Church of the "aggiornamento", for our men, pure reference to the spirit will suffice, precisely as the evidence of a transcendent reality, to appeal to another force in order to graft onto our force, to have a foreboding that our battle is not only a political battle, to attract an invisible consecration on a new world of men and leaders of men.